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A No Mask of Woman

By YONE NOGUCHI

Translated by the author from the original Japanese.

When you tread on the bridge* beating a step of soft white rhythm,
Your body is trembling delicately with more than five senses,—
The senses squeezed out of the embrace of tears and laughter,
What wild reality gains from its purification with prayer;
You walk along the passion-world of shadow, dark yet clear, cold yet dear.
Ah, what a genius did carve you?—
He must have given you the last precious mood that remained
From the distillation of senses with a physical experience;
Then you awoke to a wide and deep world of imagery, a world of poesy.
Whenever I see you, I wonder at your reserve of passion, and your way of
expressing it,
You are the extraordinary possessor of feeling,
And no other stage of the world will see such an economist of passion like
yourself.
(The real art must begin with the economy of feeling.)
Oh, 'tis wonderful to see how even a little touch of emotion makes you cry,
or smile, or do both at the same time,
(I know that laughter and tears, stream out of the same source,)
Ah, what a neutral wonder of emotion is in you!
Your long slender eyes, your pair of eye-brows apart and high,
Your nose squatting ponderously, thick and flat,
Your mouth with the white teeth and the under-lip turning upward,—
Somewhere in you the women, all of them, will find their own likeness,
You are no one woman,
But all the woman in one,—
A thing created with the essence of all women pounded in a mortar,
You are the very ghost of all of them.

*The bridge called Hashigakari is a long, raised passage leading to the stage.

Danko: The Emperor's Archangel

By MITCHELL DAWSON

I.

IN those days Thirty-fifth street in Chicago was a street of grotesque pleasure and the cafes that lined it—The Entertainers, The Sunset, The Palm Garden—were the warrens of a crowing, snorting, snickering humor. Black boys and yellow boys like dukes and kings sunned themselves of an evening under the cafe lights. Along the streets girls with negroid eyes and pale skins pisked up white men: an open mongrelizing that imports something sinister to the orthodox American but which is as ancient as the simmering of racial colors in an Asiatic or Mediterranean sea-port.

On the twentieth day of June, 1920, at seven o'clock in the evening, The Grand Exalted Ruler of the Star Order of Ethiopia and Emperor of Abyssinia drove down Thirty-fifth Street in a rusty touring-car. He sat tall and solemn in a Prince Albert coat and high silk hat. Beside him rode his Archangel robed in red, green and yellow; and above them streamed the Abyssinian banner with the lion of King Menelik rampant. The seven coal black Princes of Abyssinia, each in a blue robe and red fez, trotted behind the car on coal black horses; and in their wake straggled a rabble of negroes and whites.

The parade, as the newspapers called it, stopped in front of The Entertainers Cafe. The Archangel pounded a tribal tom-tom on an old drum. The sound beat its way into the cafe through the

rhythm of the jazz band. The cafe crowd drifted out upon the sidewalk. The Emperor of Abyssinia took off his hat; and standing high upon the seat of the touring-car, he hung above the crowd like a lean black totem inspired by an ironical God. With eyes rolling he declaimed his poranoid vision of a new Empire.

Yellow, black, chalk-white and scarlet faces, bareheaded and under straw hats, looked up at him blankly, wearily, wondering what was his game. His long thin arms jerked above them menacingly as he boomed out phrases about "de Lawd Jesus Chris'," "de vas and fertile country of our fathers", "de invisible powahs leadin' us to de promis' land."

He took a United States flag from his pocket, poured oil on it from a bottle and struck a match. In a moment a negro policeman and a white sailor jumped for him. A quick fusillade of shots. The crowd churned and burst apart. Horses reared and sprang away. More shots. And in a minute the street was empty. On the pavement lay a dead policeman and a dead sailor; in a cigar store a dead clerk.

This was the Abyssinian riot.

Two negroes were hanged a year later. There was no mystery about them. One had the mentality of a Bushman. The other's brain was addled with visions; he believed to the last minute that "they"—the invisible—would save him.

And the Archangel? He was certainly not one of these two. Somehow

he had slipped away. It was believed that if he had been caught, he might have explained everything. As it is his motives remain obscure. Perhaps he was taking part in a child's game just to see what would happen: a little adventure into the theatrical.

II.

The state's attorney's party found the Abyssinian headquarters in the basement of a negro-smelling tenement on South Dearborn street. A long room: the floor covered with rush mats. At one end a dais: on the dais a large packing-box draped with orange-colored cloth; and on the box an image carved from teak-wood—a long-headed caricature about three feet high, with a hugh nose and cheerfully sneering mouth. Light struggled in through a dirty iron-barred window.

The flat-footed investigators set to work at once collecting "evidence." The room was littered with revolvers, dirks, old bayonets, fezzes, kaftans, blankets and queer pennants. I glanced about to survey the place before it should be completely devastated. A book-shelf in one corner caught my eye. I examined it casually and discovered a row of badly used books: "Cornhuskers"; "Huckleberry Finn"; "Ripostes"; "Leaves of Grass"; "Walden"; "Winesburg, Ohio"; "Martin Eden"; "Al Que Quiere"; "The Path on the Rainbow"; "Coloured Stars"; and soiled copies of *Poetry*, *Others* and *The Little Review*.

The flyleaf of "Cornhuskers" was inscribed:

"Bush-singer—jungle-walker—
for you a straight-away, a swift going—
C. S."

At the end of the shelf I found a copy-book bulging with manuscript and clippings; and when I opened it I came upon some printed proof sheets with the heading "Natural Songs" and a manuscript poem called "The Footstep of the Rhinoceros." That was enough. I furtively slipped the copy-book into my rain-coat pocket.

At home I examined these papers with excitement and wonder. There was little doubt that I had come upon some unpublished writings of Danko—the black man from Africa who passed through a world of whites with a simple indifference to its smoky contrivances, passed through and disappeared.

Many pages of the manuscript are written in what has proved to be a native African dialect; but there are nineteen complete poems in English and twelve pages of proof from "Natural Songs."

The copy-book is a series of jottings like this:

"Drunk as snakes—these people after work.

"If one tongue meets a thousand, it faints.

"Sandburg is good voodoo. Am—in—motony—
Eiyo-nyo! Sometimes he cries like Owuri at night.
Sometimes he barks monkey-cough. He is son of palm-wine.

"The Isana says he eats no food, he eats the wind in the bush. These poets!

"Would Sherwood Anderson know why my people walk so softly and always laugh at sunrise?

"Why should we seek among crocodiles? Better sit on a round hill and wait for a thief-star, ready to spit a great wish.

"And Mencken—maybe he has lost a woman—"

One of the "Natural Songs" is amusing:

HO-HO! BOLI BOYS.

Now that my breasts are large
and the old women
have unfolded sa-hari,
the eyes of the Boli boys
follow me about
sniffing.

Ho-ho! Boli boys,
I am not afraid;
I am not yet ready
for the warriors' house.
You are too
four-footed.

III.

It was Giovanni Papini who—like an omnivident god of literature—first wrote Danko down as a new and singular genius of the negro race. In his critique on Danko in "Stroncatore" he says:

"Danko, whom his compatriots bizarrely nicknamed 'The Quick Ear', is a true and authentic negro of Nigeria and was born in 1877 at Shibu on the banks of the Benue. No one knows exactly who was his father and he has never spoken of his mother. At the age of thirteen years we find him already on the coast, at Akassa, where he learned English and religion from a missionary. From his fifteenth to his twenty-third year we know nothing of his life: it is what supports our picturing him in the jungles of his own country hunting wild beasts. Others, more malicious, say that he was a cattle thief and seducer of girls. But the most probable hypothesis is that he lived in perfect solitude like a savage animal, listening to the voices of the great trees and of the waters."

Then, according to Papini, at the age of twenty-three Danko reappeared with some companions, traversing the western end of the Sahara, stopping at Timbuctoo—"the mysterious capital of the desert"—and finally arriving at Tangiers. There he became in turn a masseur in an Arabian bath-house, a longshoreman in the harbor, a servant of the Portuguese consul, and an itinerant vendor of corals and conches.

Somehow—God knows under what delusion—he shipped as a scullion on an American steamship which discharged him at New York in May, 1902. Again he became a wanderer. Says Papini:

"It would seem that he covered on foot or hiding in freight cars the greater part of the United States, doing the most humble and humiliating work. The American negroes, descendants of slaves, looked upon him with suspicion and would not believe that he was really born in Africa. Once, in a saloon in Omaha, he had to knife one who, crazed by whiskey, let himself insult him as the lowest of tramps. . . . For that he had to pass a few months in prison in Kansas.

"But in this wandering life he had the good fortune of meeting Jack London, that vagabond and irregular genius, who had returned from Alaska and the hunting of the caribou to write: 'The Call of the Wild'

"The writings of Walt Whitman and the friendship of Jack London revealed the genius of Danko to himself. He felt himself a poet, discovered that he was able to write like Europeans."

Signor Papini does not reveal the sources of his information, but I believe that he received it partly by word of mouth from someone who had met Danko in America and partly from a magazine article by Harry Clarence, who seemed to be much concerned over Danko's soul. Clarence's account is almost worthless because his mind had no antennae with which to sense Danko's spiritual yet sensuous imagination. In fact his only important contribution to our record of Danko is that the whole edition of "Natural Songs" was destroyed by fire in Philadelphia where it had been privately printed in 1915. Bad luck always came sniffing at Danko's heels.

IV.

Most of Danko has been sponged up in mystery, but he left traces from which we can reconstruct a personality

as violent and sensitive as Arthur Rimbaud. Indeed, by an almost unbelievable coincidence, it would seem that these two wanderers met during the last year of Rimbaud's life. If we can trust Danko's record at all, he was a porter in Rimbaud's train moving from Shibu to Akassa in 1890. Danko was then only thirteen years old, but had the build and development of a grown man. It was certain that Danko meant no more to Rimbaud than any other black boy, but Danko must have been stirred by the white man's quick sense and vivid tongue. He says of Rimbaud:

"We taste morning rains
with the same nostrils."

And again:

"You speak our words
like a medicine-man (orkoiyo)
who has drunk honey-wine."

It is singular that Danko's work has remained in obscurity. Rene Maran, a cultured negro from Martinique, won the 1921 Prix Goncourt for his African novel, *Batouala*. Yet Danko, the first authentic African poet to write in English, has had his only real recognition from Giovanni Papini.

Both Maran and Danko show the simple gusto of true negroes. But Maran has become partly Gallicized; he stands a little apart from his own people with a certain amused insight. Danko never balances between two races. His speech is the breathing of a scarlet flower pushing up through humid undergrowth; it is like the hands of a child who has not grown tired from touching things too often.

Our American negro poets—except Fenton Johnson in his later work—have

lock-stepped in the English tradition. And Fenton Johnson, although he has worked out an idiom of his own, is necessarily expressing a people who have been separated for several centuries from the life of African tribesmen.

"The Anthology of Negro Verse," published not long ago, bears me out. And in "Harlem Shadows" Claude McKay croons with the voice of the urban American negro, wistful, yes, but moralistic and faithful to the tunes he has heard the white man sing. As for Paul Laurence Dunbar, without the dialect you could not distinguish him from Ben King. If he had expressed his race with any truly original power, he could not have achieved popular success. Witness, Danko.

It may be said that Danko, too, has been influenced by Caucasian culture. But he does not parade in the store-clothes of white sentiment for the sake of almost certain applause. Luckily he was almost mature before he acquired "English and religion." He has learned, of course, certain ways of speech, good or bad, from reading Whitman, Pound and Sandburg. In "The Footstep of Rhinoceros" for instance:

My father was gored
by the rhinoceros at Tolonga;
my father was trampled.
The rhinoceros with two horns
was the enemy of my father.

The footstep of the rhinoceros
is in my ears;
I feel him nosing through the bush.
A yellow palm-bird
flies out of a monkey-bread tree.
Kas! Topen!

My shield is rhinoceros hide
and my spear is thonged
with his belly skin.
I am oiled with his grease,
rank and sweet in the sun.

I have left off my thigh bells,
I have left off the leopard's tail;
And no one shall sound
the great Kudu horn.—
But this morning I spate
and I spit now again to the east.

Kipsirichet is a coward;
he goes in fear.
His eyes are evil and small,
but a white eye
does not kill a bird.

Kas! Topen!
The footstep of the rhinoceros
is in my ear.
I await him
at the edge of the bush.

Signor Papini says:

"The poetic sensibility of Danko, so far as one can get at it across traditions, is absolutely different from the European and also the Asiatic. We are familiar so far with negro art only in the form of negro sculpture.

"He who has visited the ethnographic collections of the Trocadero at Paris or the Museum of Leida, or even, to stay in Italy, the Museo Kircheriano of Rome or that of Anthropology in Florence, will have seen, in the African cases, puppets of carved wood which are called vaguely fetishes and are studied only from the ethnographic aspect.

"However, he who observes them well and in a disinterested spirit, looking at them as works of art and not as pieces for the school-room, will find that they have a character, a style, an individual physiogomy. They are, mostly, little figures, carved in a summary and crude manner, but in which there is a magnificent and in a certain sense the most modern stylization of the human figure. Negro art, like the ancient Egyptian, is at the same time synthetic and realistic, and he who is acquainted with the most recent efforts in the painting of the advance guard will find that there has been a real and peculiar influence of negro sculpture upon the latest European paintings. Not for nothing does Pablo Picasso, the creator of cubism, keep in his house a few of these fetishes.

"The poetry of Danko, as far as a parallelism is possible in two arts of such a different nature, resembles a little the sculpture of his anonymous racial brothers. He does not lose himself in minute descriptions, in diversions of style, in decorations, in visual counterpoint. In describing a night of heat he says: 'the point of the yellow moon

bathed in the zinc sea'. It is enough. Of a woman: 'the sole of her foot marvelled at her lightness'. Of the elephant: 'the rosy flower of the trunk raised itself above the immobility of the wrinkled column'. The sun for him is 'the golden fist of the sky' and the beloved 'two white eyes stretched out toward me, kissing me before the lips'."

V.

The notion of a parallelism between Danko's poetry and the art of the African fetish-carver finds some support in the proof sheets of "Natural Songs"—the only surviving fragments of that book. But these songs except "HoHo! Boli Boys" already quoted are so natural that they are unpublishable in America. The fire which destroyed the whole edition of that book may not have been wholly accidental. The scuff-scuff of Comstockian sneakers in the alleyway or heavy breathing at the key-hole has thrown even private publishers into panic before. But there is no depravity or vicious license in these songs; only a shocking innocence of our taboos.

The manuscript poems which I found show Danko thrusting this way and that for an expression in English which would satisfy him. He has naturally changed since Papini wrote of him in 1916. His love songs are less harsh:

NAGULI GIRL.

Girl, Naguli girl,
I see you in the sword-grass
shivering;
moon-fingers at your breasts,
agonim on your head
and the red stripe
of blood berries
across your cheeks.
Girl, girl, Naguli girl,
I hear your heart
like a love-drum
beating.

Come nearer, nearer,
Naguli girl!
In the far hills

dawn is creeping:
My hut in the thicket
awaits our dreaming.

Girl, Naguli girl,
I hear your heart
like a love-drum
beating.

And he has told delightful fables. The
only one short enough to quote is:

SLANDER.

They said to the mocking bird:
Awoko,
you have spoken evil
of the king.

And Awoko answered:
So—so—so—
maybe—perhaps—
I sing two hundred songs
in the morning,
two hundred at noon,
and two hundred in the afternoon—
all in a day's work—
besides many frolicsome notes—
maybe—perhaps—

And an interesting fragment from
the copy-book shows another vein:

The cricket cries;
the year changes;
the pepper-bush by the road-side
quivers.
Knock, knock
the calabash
and drive grief
from the house.

Of Danko himself we have no trace.
"Bush-singer, jungle-walker", he has
slipped through the white man's jungle
or hides somewhere in its monstrous
shadows. The Emperor's Archangel
has vanished too. They are lost like
whispers in the night. One or a pair—
they merge; and I see a fantastic figure
in colored robes sitting in a touring-car
on Thirty-fifth Street pounding out the
rhythm of a new song.

My Littleness

By LOUREINE A. ABER

Two pinholes in the curtain....
My eyes;
Two weeds flapping forlornly in a field of corn....
My hands.

And in the distance like a foghorn blowing....
My heart.

I am no bigger than mountains,
Or mightier than stars,
The sphinx smells of me familiarly,
Daisies touch lips with me....
I shall be dust soon.

The Carol of the Cockroaches

By LELAND DAVIS

When Adam was a shadow, a thought, and a plan
That God went a-brooding on a-building of the world,
There was hippogriff and elephant ere Man was Man;
And in the Garden, on the lawn, in the corn, dew-pearled,
Were cockroaches, wee ones, spry little *wee*
Cockroaches, homeless, awaiting you and me!

Now Cain He foresaw the Sodom and Gomorrah,
And he paused in his phantasy, He laid aside the clay.
And God He bowed His head, and I wot He was in sorrow!
Then God spieth Innocence! There at his feet were they,
The cockroaches, wee ones, spry little *wee*
Cockroaches, homeless, awaiting you and me!

Ere Man was the cockroach! the cockroach of many,
In lowlihood all worthy most meet unto His Grace!
In silence and humblewise, a-wagging of antennae,
A-begging God for Kitchens and a-gazing in His face,
Were cockroaches, wee ones, spry little *wee*
Cockroaches, homeless, awaiting you and me!

Though Cain He foresaw and Sodom and Gomorrah,
Ere Man was the cockroach! And Sing *Deo Gracias!*
For God He fell to thumping (And I wot He was in sorrow)—
And God He fell to thumping at the lump that Adam was,
For cockroaches, wee ones, spry little *wee*
Cockroaches, homeless, awaiting you and me!

The Bastard

By ANTON CHEKHOV

Translated by Jean Cutner

WHILE out on his evening walk, Professor Miguev, Doctor of Scientific Didactics, D.C.L., M.A., L.L.D., stopped by a telegraph pole and deeply sighed. He shifted Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason" to one hand and Hegel's "Logic" to the other, and stood musing. It was on this very spot, a week ago, that, as he was returning from his customary evening walk, Agnes, the former servant girl in his home, stole up behind him and said, her eyes sparkling with malevolence:

"You just wait, Mister! I'll get even with you! I'll show you how to seduce innocent girls. . . . Your wife'll know all about this! And I'll go to court! And you'll get the *child!*"

Then she demanded that he deposit in the bank in her name, no less than five thousand roubles, which was impossible for him to do. Recalling this, Miguev sighed again and again, and most wholeheartedly berated himself for having yielded to a momentary diversion which had now got him into such a mess and such mental uneasiness.

Upon reaching his villa, Miguev sat down for a while on the doorstep. It was just ten o'clock, a small slice of moon peeped from behind the clouds. There wasn't a soul in sight; the old people had gone to bed, and the youngsters were out walking in the grove by the sea. He searched his pockets for a match, and then his elbow came in contact with something soft, yielding. . . . He glanced down and his face became distorted with horror, as if he had seen a reptile. On the doorstep, close to the door, lay a bundle. In it something of an elongated shape lay wrapped up; the eminent doctor, thrusting his hand into a corner left slightly agape, sensed something warm, damp. . . . In deathly terror he sprang to his feet and quickly stared about him, like a convict watching a chance to escape. . . .

"She did it then, the slut!" he said through his teeth, clenching his fists and taring down at the bundle. "God! here it lies: the. . . . the bastard!"

Fright, shame and fury rendered him speechless. What should he do now? What would his wife say if she found out? What would his colleagues say? And His Excellency, the boss, would call him in, slap him on the belly, give vent to his peculiar little giggle, and say: "Ha-ha! Congratulations! 'In the beary gray hairs and in the guts the devil himself'—hey, you rascal you?" The whole of the summer colony would discover his secret and respectable mothers of respectable families would

show him the door....As for the newspapers: the illegitimate children of eminent professors are a sweet morsel indeed; and in this notorious way his, Miguev's, name would be spread all over the country....

One of the windows was open. He could hear his wife setting the table for supper. Somewhere nearby Ermolai, the janitor, was fingering a resentful mandolin which throbbed and wailed in reply....The...the thing in the bundle had but to wake up, to squeal—and the secret would be out. Miguev became aware of an urgent desire to be on the move.

"Quickly, quickly," he muttered to himself. "While nobody's looking! I'll take it and drop it at somebody else's door...."

Miguev took up the bundle and, with a moderate, measured gait, so as not to appear any more suspicious than might any learned man wandering down the street at night, put his feet carefully down the length of the street....

"A remarkably nasty predicament," he thought, endeavoring the while to capture an indifferent, and even bored, expression. "Carting a newborn babe down the street....God, if anyone sees me and catches on, I'm done for....Here, I'll put it at this door....Or perhaps I'd better not, the windows are open and someone may see me. What the devil! Aha....I know! I'll bring him to Mielkin's, the department store owner....He's wealthy and pretty good-hearted; he might welcome the kid...."

And so Miguev decided to play Santa Claus out of season, although Mielkin's villa lay on the very outskirts of the resort, quite a distance away.

"If only he'll keep quiet, and not bawl or try to fall out," thought Miguev, fingering the bundle anxiously. For some reason he was sure the infant was a boy. "This certainly is something I didn't expect! Under my arm, like a package of sausages, I am carrying—a human being.... A human being with feelings like everyone else's....with a soul....If all goes well, and the Mielkins adopt him, he might come to amount to something....He might even become an eminent professor, a leader of armies, a great writer....*Anything* may happen! And here am I, carrying him under my arm, like a pair of worn out shoes going to the shoe-maker's—and in about thirty or forty years I may have to salute him, to mind my P's and Q's when I address him!"

He turned into a narrow, deserted alley. The fences on either side cast thick shadows across the hollow-sounding sidewalk. And suddenly Miguev began to feel that he was engaged in an act both criminal and inhuman.

"See here," he thought, "This sort of thing is essentially caddish and savage....After all, what has the miserable child done, to be thus peddled from door to door....Is it his fault he was born? Has he done anyone any harm? What scoundrels we are....We like to make the bed, but

the children have to lie in it. . . . It is only necessary to use some common sense, some decency, to penetrate this farce! There I was—brawling—and now the child has to pay for it. . . . If I should bring him to the Mielkins they are just as likely as not to send him to an orphanage—and who doesn't know what orphanages are! An upbringing by indifferent strangers, no love, no warmth, no solicitude. . . . They'll bring him up to be a shoemaker. . . . he'll take to drink, learn foul language, starve half to death. . . . A shoemaker! While he is the son of a scholar. . . . a scholar of noble blood, at that. . . . Why, damn it, he's my own flesh and blood!"

From the shadows of the linden trees, Miguev emerged into a moonlit street and, clumsily fingering the bundle, untied it and looked at the contents.

"He sleeps. . . . Ah, little rascal, you have an aquiline nose like your daddy. . . ."

He looked long at the child. "He sleeps. . . . and does not know that his own father is looking at him. . . . Heigh-ho! The world's a stage. . . . Well, then, forgive me! Forgive me, youngster! What is to be is to be, I guess. . . ."

Here Miguev blinked and winked; down his cheeks something crept, like a wet insect. . . . He re-wrapped the infant, put him back in his armpit and proceeded on his way. All the way to Mielkin's villa his mind battled with points of ethics, while conscience scratched at his breast.

"Were I an exemplary, honest citizen," he thought. "I wouldn't give a damn, I'd take the child to friend wife, kneel before her and say: 'Forgive me, a miserable sinner! Torture *me*, if you must—but this innocent child must be taken care of. We have no children, let's bring this one up!' She's a good woman, she'd agree. And then my child would be with me. . . . Heigh-ho!"

He approached Mielkin's house and stopped in uncertainty. He pictured himself in his sitting-room, reading a newspaper, the while a youngster with an aquiline nose—like his own—played about him, tugging at the tassels of his dressing-gown; and at the same time he pictured his leering associates, the newspapers, His Excellency himself, giggling, slapping him on the stomach. . . . In his heart, side by side with a bruising conscience, dwelt something warm, something sad, something sad and warm and sweet. . . .

The Doctor of Scientific Didactics deposited his burden on the top step of the Mielkin villa and fatalistically waved his hand. Again down his face things like wet insects crawled. . . .

"Forgive me for being such a scoundrel, old man," he muttered, staring down at the bundle. "Don't hold it against me in the years to come! . . ."

He turned to go. Then he cleared his throat and said decisively:

"Oh well, let come what may! I don't give a hang. I'll take him and let people talk!"

He snatched up the bundle and quickly strode back, the way he had come.

"Let them talk," he repeated. "She's a good woman—she'll understand.... We'll bring it up.... If it's a boy we'll call it John, if a girl, Mary.... In our old age it'll be a comfort to us...."

Weeping with fright and shame, full of hopes and of vague enthusiasm, and of a soul-appeasing wistfulness, he found his wife and knelt before her.

"Anna," he said with a sob, laying the child on the floor before her. "Don't condemn before you hear! Miserable sinner that I am, this is my child! You remember Agnes, the servant girl.... Well, she—I—"

In utter confusion, not waiting for a reply, he sprang up and fled from the room. The cries of the child, which had awakened, followed him.

He went outdoors, thinking: "I'll be here till she calls me.... I'll give her time to come to herself, to get used to the idea...."

Ermolai, the janitor, mandolin still in hand, came past him, glanced at him and shrugged.... In a minute he came back, an expression of uncertainty and perplexity on his face.

"Here's a queer to-do," he said, with a smile half ironical, half embarrassed. "Just now, Mister Miguev, there was a skirt here—Fannie, the washerwoman. Well, like the darn fool that all women are, she put her brat here on the doorstep, and while she was in to see me, somebody swiped the brat.... What the hell!"

"What are you talking about!" shouted Miguev, his eyes popping.

At this Ermolai, who put an interpretation of his own on his master's anger, took a deprecating step back and scratched his head.

"Well, Mister Miguev," he said with a sigh. "You know how it is.... It's summer now.... hard to get along.... a woman's nice to have around...."

And glancing at Miguev's gaping eyes, he cleared his throat and continued:

"Kind of disorderly, I know, but—You said not to let strange women in here. And what's a fellow to do, that hasn't one of his own.... When Agnes was here, you see, I didn't have to.... But now.... And when Agnes was here—"

"Get the hell out of here, donkey!" shouted Miguev, stamping his foot.

His wife sat as before, and now she was angered and amazed, her red, tearful eyes on the child before her, when Professor Miguev, Doctor of Scientific Didactics, D.C.L., M.A., L.L.D., "Logic" under one arm and "Critique of Pure Reason" under the other, reappeared before her.

"There, there. . . ." he muttered, his face distorted, his mouth grimacing in an attempt to smile facetiously. "I was just fooling. . . ." He tucked the bundle under his arm again. "Didn't think *I* would do such a thing, did you? I was just fooling. . . ."Tisn't mine. . . .it's the washer-woman's. . . .Just fooling. . . .I'll take it back to her. . . ."

And Professor Miguev, the wailing bundle, Hegel and Kant—all disappeared at once.

Kinfolk

By MARJORIE ALLEN SEIFFERT

My forefathers had lusty flesh
And long, proud bones,
Their names, a text, their birth and death
Are carved on stones,

I know my body came from them
But nowhere can I find
If their hearts fathered my own heart,
Their minds, my troubled mind.

If one had written twenty words
Like twenty of my own
I'd seek out his forgotten grave
And feel less alone,

And lying on the rich earth
Where proud bones rest
Take comfort in the silence
Of my kinsman's breast.

At Eleusis

By H. D.

*What they did,
they did for Dionysius,
for ecstasy's sake:*

now take the basket,
think;
think of the moment you count
most foul in your life;
conjure it,
supplicate,
pray to it;
your face is bleak, you retract,
you dare not remember it:

stop;
it is too late,
the next stands by the altar step,
a child's face yet not innocent,
it will prove adequate, but you,
I could have spelt your peril at the gate,
yet for your mind's sake,
though you could not enter
wait.

*What they did,
they did for Dionysius,
for ecstasy's sake:*

now take the basket—
(ah face in a dream,
did I not know your heart,
I would falter,
for each that fares onward
is my child;
ah can you wonder
that my hands shake,
that my knees unbend,
I am a mortal, set in the goddess' place?)

Bohemian Chelsea

By ARTHUR SYMONS

I MUST confess that I am much less acquainted with the modern Bohemian Chelsea than with the actual Bohemia which is well known to me; from the fact that I have been there twice, once in 1877 on my way to Russia. Watery and wooded Bohemia might I imagine have seemed to Shakespeare, if he had really seen it, the place for a tragical pastoral; and, as for myself, the genius of Wagner having been revealed to me in Bayreuth, the sensation I had in Prague caused by a sunset like a fiery orange, breaking through barred clouds, was the equivalent of the vision of the gate of the Venusberg. As much of "The Winter's Tale" takes place in Bohemia, so, in every Bohemia, anachronisms abound and are amusing—and, as a rule, of no more real importance than the trifling error in the amount of leagues traversed by a witch's broom in less than a minute. I, likewise, "in that subtle shade", sang of one of London's taverns in verses named "Bohemia."

"Drawn blinds and flaring gas within,
And wine, and women, and cigars;
Without, the city's heedless din;
Above, the white unheeding stars;"

but in my verses on the Cavour—that curious café in Leicester Square which has been and still is haunted by many of the artists who live in Chelsea—there is more scent and savour.

"Then their eyes meet, and in their eyes
The accustomed smile comes up to
call,
A look half miserably wise,
Half heedlessly ironical."

The Cavour was one of my favourite haunts; it was one of Conder's favourite haunts, where we often met; not so often as in that curious house of his, 91 Cheyne Walk, from whose windows we saw vivid visions: those aspects, so beautiful and so magical, when at night that particular aspect of London is pricked out in points of fire against an enveloping darkness. I have never forgotten the most wonderful Fancy Dress Ball the Conders gave; it was in 1904. Augustus John was there, dressed like a *débardeur* of Gavarni—the born Bohemian and the born wanderer. Conder, who was in many senses a Bohemian, both in Chelsea and in Paris—"ce déraciné, toujours amoureux, bohême"—shared at least one of the passions of Verlaine, besides his passion for wondering; he shared with Baudelaire a certain complication of taste, the sense of what is irritant in cruelty, the sense of the exasperation of perfumes. Conder, who just then, was wearing his hair very long, had invented for himself the costume of a dandy of 1830, that of Balzac's Eugene de Rastignac, with white ruffles and a Parisian top-hat: the colour scheme was so perfect that it reminded me of one of Whistler's nocturnes, The Baronne de Meyer looked marvellous as Iago—as supreme in evil as Dante's Farinala; I wore a kind of Venetian domino; my wife wore a dress designed for her after "The Peacock Skirt" of Beardsley, with all the flaunting colours of the actual peacock.

A few nights before then I was with Conder in his studio when he told me this story: that less than a week ago he had returned late at night with Stella; hearing strange noises inside the house, he had rushed to the pantry, where he managed to seize the burglar's legs at the moment when he was trying to escape through the window. There was a furious fight; Conder always prided himself on the strength he had shown in such an emergency; he punched and punished his captive; he locked him up for the night; next morning he marched him off to the police station. The last time I saw Conder was on the 2nd of May, 1907, at the Private View of the New English Art Club; he was vague and dejected, obviously very ill; he talked to me wearily of the need of rest. On Sunday night, while he was painting, he suddenly said: "I feel as if I were going to faint." He went and lay down on a sofa, and as he tried to talk could not find the right words.

I met Oscar Wilde in 1894; he often invited me to his house, 16 Tite Street, a house Godwin decorated with an elegance that certainly owed something to Whistler. In one of his letters to me Wilde said: "I look forward to an evening with you, and to a talk about French Art, the one art now in Europe which is worth discussing—Verlaine's art especially. Who has parodied our dear Pater in the Cornhill? It is clever and horrid. The one on Kipling is excellent—one had merely to reproduce a caricature of him and of literature."

Wilde, whose curiosity was insatiable, often strolled into "The Crown," a semi-literary tavern chosen for its convenient position between the stage-doors

of the Empire and the Alhambra, always just before the closing hour. Lord Alfred Douglas, if I rightly remember, strolled in at least once with Wilde: as a man he was much more fascinating, much more gifted as a poet, than his elder. Wilde at that time was more than ever reckless, insolent, too certain of himself; he was shadowed and tracked by his evil reputation.

About seven years ago I saw a good deal of a strange girl who lived at Chelsea; we used to call her Jenny: that was not her real name: I invented it after Rossetti's. Year after year, on alternative nights, she was to be seen—alone or with some other girl—at the Café Royal, and, of course, at the Eiffel Tower, which is far and away the most amusing night-haunt in London. There is the inevitable Me Stulik, the Vortex room; and I must give Michael Arlen's minute description, in his "Piracy" of what he calls Mont Angel. "On the right is the door of the hotel, a door of a very different air to the other, a sealed and reticent looking door, with a tiny navel through which a worldly eye may judge of your business: a door, in fact, with the secret air of having very important business of its own as a door, which indeed it has." "Or," he continues, "was it, as an after thought, nothing to have sat and watched the bearded and significant figure of M. Stutz's most considerable patron—an epic figure, that! and to have wondered whether that silent detachment betokened a great artist or a great vagabond?"

Jenny, often to be found at the Cado-gan Arms, one of the landmarks in Chelsea, placed so conveniently at the corner of two streets; at the Cavendish

Hotel in Jermyn street that has qualities, unique in their kind, exotic and singular; at the Cave of Harmony in Soho, where there is a small stage, where people flock in at the most uncertain hours of the night and leave at equally uncertain hours, after some entertainment—which becomes more amazing after one o'clock; or after some one act play which has been composed for it by a versatile young writer who I understand is the original of the incredibly tall William Erasmus who comes into Mr. Osborn Sitwell's "The Machine Breaks Down," a cruel and unjustifiable, amusing and malicious, scandalous and scathing piece of work; some of which having been read aloud in Paris—I hope in French—seems to have pleased the painter whose painting and whose personality always appealed to me and to the boxer whose prowess is certainly proverbial. I shall not mention the various night clubs in various quarters of London Jenny haunted, nor the other taverns which have given names and no particular reputations, nor her periodical disappearances abroad; only the fact that she was seen in Chelsea on the last day of January. She always had a curious fascination of an evil kind; and with that a kind of diabolical beauty which could become, as she became, exasperating. At times she reminded one of "La Scorpine" in Cladel's novel, with her clear profile, her nervous dark inexorable eyes; with something in her regard that was infernal. When she was in one of her furies she seemed to me almost the image of that painted female viper in Vigny's greatest poem. One night, it was on New Year's Eve, I went with an Eastern woman who has

the passion and the magnetism of her race to a reception given by Augustus John in his studio in Chelsea. Jenny, of course, was there, smoking, rushing to and fro, among that crowd that surges, reckless as the waves, between the dances and the drinks. There was also Betty, who changes from good to bad in a most unconventional fashion, one never knows why; there was Helen, who began by looking exotic and wearing coloured and barbaric dresses and then became less interesting; Lilian, who reminded me of the depraved little ballet-girl in "La Femme-Enfant" of Catulle Mendès: Liliane, whose virginal innocence of face is but the flower of a soul in which vice has sprung, a type which has never been so perfectly expressed before—Liliane, a girl I actually met in Paris on the Boulevard des Italiens one night when I was returning from Montmartre; she was in a carriage, she waved her hand to me, I jumped in beside her. I must not forget that wonderful Sylvia, who confessed to her Irish and Spanish blood, who was never quiet, who was stirred by her violent emotions, swayed by her wilder passions; she was feverish and feline. Rather to my surprise the Eastern woman admired Jenny more than the others; only, as I was taking my friend back she said: "Curious, the effect on me of that girl's face. Yet, what I want is, when one comes out into the hot sunshine that warms one's blood, to see the eager hungering faces of men and women in the street, dramatic faces over which the disturbing influences of life have passed and left their symbols; then one's heart thrills up into one's throat."

I Believe

By ELIZABETH J. COATSWORTH

I believe in griffins
Lying crouched on cliffs
Looking into the fire of the sun.
I believe in Pans
Their fleeced thighs hidden under shepherds' cloaks
Leaving the marks of their hoofs in solitary meadows,
And also in centaurs whose speech is like a whinnying,
And in dragons which coil in clefts of mountains
Their scaled chins resting on treasure.
I believe in angels in the blue dome of the sky
With wings meeting above their heads in rainbow-colored
flames,
And equally in Valkyrie, termagants breasting the wind
On charging horses across the wild lanes of the clouds.
I believe in the cunning of werewolves and in goblins
And in the naiads whose green hair travellers have glimpsed
Skeined across lost forest pools.
I believe in all spirits, beautiful or base,
Which joy or terror strikes from human minds
To lead on earth their unsubstantial lives.

The Gymnast

By LOUREINE A. ABER

Life goes, turning handsprings,
Life goes like a tired gymnast doing his stunts,
Until the slack rope swirls into a million gray-green, red-black threads,
and the feet slip.

Two Poems

By YONE NOGUCHI

To Robert Browning

You are a smoking-room story-teller of the pageant of life seen by senses,
Your gusto in speech turns your art into obscurity,
Again from the obscurity into a valedictory:
You are a provincialism endorsed by eccentric pride.
You are sometimes riotous to escape from anarchism,
Your great thirst for expression makes you a soul-wounding romancer,
You often play the mystagogue, and appear cruel.
You are a glutton of colourful adventures,
You are a troubadour serenading between the stars and Life,
Your love song on a guitar torments us even physically;
You are a realist who under the darkness purifies himself into the light of
optimism;
You are a griffin wildly dancing on human laughter.

To Meredith

So sentimentalism gives place to paganism,
Do not make pantheism appear to work the emancipation of life;

Meredith, I know, when your brain is tired,
You play the brutal game of theory,—

Oh, forget your insolent logic and damn'd morality and all;
Come with me, Meredith, into the Buddhist Hall of Meditation,

Not to write epigrams,
But to walk between the laws written by Life in trance;

We will find a true place in the universe, and with Pan-like eyes,
Sing the sun, women, trees and rocks.

Dirge

By WILLIAM ALEXANDER PERCY

Tuck the earth, fold the sod,
Drop the hollow-sounding clod.
Quiet's come; time for sleeping,
Tired out of mirth and weeping,
Calmed at last of mirth and weeping.
Tuck the earth, fold the sod;
Quiet's here, maybe God.

Protest Against Realism

By EARL DANIELS

You should sit at evening in a shadowy room
Before a mahogany spinet, glowing with the protuberant humor of age.
You should sit beneath a portrait in contented Rembrandt browns with a
frame of unpolished gold.
Your eyes should lift to the steady light of two tall candles waxy white
In antique sconce of massy silver weight,
Carven with smiling, round cheeked figures,
Cupids and satyrs alternate.
The quiet candles, pallid and cool, should play upon your face,
The fire should throb up and down the Valenciennes lace at your throat,
And over your smooth satin dress, dyed rose color.
Your fingers, cool as summer rain, should stray soundlessly over the ivory
keys of the spinet,—
Soundlessly over the keys. . . .
You should sit at evening in a shadowy room,
You yourself like a lovely shadow of yesterday.

The Sophisticated Innocents of Modern Verse

By ARTHUR H. NETHERCOT

SOPHISTICATION, people are beginning to realize, is one of the chief characteristics of most modern poetry. Poets today—like modern young folks—*know*. And that is what sophistication means. Neither to the typical contemporary poet nor to the current “flapper” or “sheik” are there any longer any mysteries or arcana. The members of these groups have lived too long themselves, or too fast themselves, or else too many have lived before them, for them to be genuinely innocent or ignorant of anything. Poets from the Decadents to the Imagists to the Freudians have all laid claim to this *Weltwissenschaft*, which in some cases has led merely to a romantic *Weltschmerz*, in some to suicidal disillusionment, and in some even to dogmas and illustrations as to what poetry and poets should—and can!—be.

In the eighteenth century—also a period of intense sophistication: witness “The Rape of the Lock” and “An Essay on Criticism”—there was a great deal of enthusiasm for the “primitive poet,” the “unspoiled poet of nature”, as he was called. It was a part of that great sentimental movement which endeavored to idealize all phases of the primitive, the uncivilized, the unsophisticated, in society, government, religion, and art; which held that original man began to speak a full-flowered language of rhythm and euphony and awe because of the simple impact of the beauties of nature and the goodness of God upon

his perfectly attuned soul; which preferred to worship Homer as a blind and illiterate wandering bard rather than as the apex of the achievement of individual man; which later on in Germany and America was to lead to the formulation of the “communal theory” of the origin of the popular ballad, holding that these spirited narrative songs were the composition of the “folk”—of a singing, dancing, pre-historic throng around a camp-fire, each member of which contributed his peculiar part, until a poetic and artistic whole of superlative merit was the magic result.

But the eighteenth century had just as much difficulty pointing out such an “unspoiled poet of nature” as we have today—let alone producing one itself, with the possible exception of Blake. And most people, of course, consider Blake as “not quite right in the head”, as Granfer Cantle would say. Nevertheless, theoretically the eighteenth century admired the hypothetical virtues of the primitive poet and of primitive man excessively, and searched for him heroically through the ancient literatures of Greece and Rome, of Scandinavia and Wales, of Erin and Caledonia, of Cathay and Ind, and of medieval Europe too. The charm of the remote and the exotic and the ingenuous was upon it, and this charm grew as the Romantic Movement advanced.

As a continuation of the same tendency, twentieth-century experiments in versification, diction, and material

reveal the twentieth-century feeling that the older poetic forms have become too familiar through long handling. Consequently, many attempts have been made to regain the old pristine freshness—or what may be substituted for it—much in the manner of the Pre-Raphaelites. These attempts, nevertheless—this premise is laid down more or less dogmatically—are *conscious* attempts. Simplicity today nearly always tends to become intellectual (of the head) rather than natural (of the heart). And this statement, be it noted here, is not to be taken as casting invidious reflections on either type of poetry. No poem can be judged by its conformity to any generalization; no poem can be judged in any way but by its accomplishment as an individual poem.

On the distinction just asserted, however, may be made one classification of much modern poetry. Like all classifications, it may frequently prove faulty; but it may be permitted because, like all classifications, it ought to provoke thought for a few moments.

Modern verse, then, might be partly classified according to whether its writers admit their sophistication or try to conceal it. The first group would contain poets like Conrad Aiken, in his "Forslin" or "Senlin"; Maxwell Bodenheim, in his "Ironies"; T. S. Eliot, in his "Waste Land"; E. A. Robinson, in his "Man Against the Sky"; the Sitwells, in their "Wheels"; Ezra Pound; and Minna Loy; and so forth and so on, in all their staled and unstaled infinite variety. The second group would contain the sophisticated innocents of modern poetry, whose innocent rebellion against the sophistication of the others

is in itself conscious (and therefore sophisticated).—

II.

Do diddle di do,
 Poor Jim Jay
 Got stuck fast
 In Yesterday.
 Squinting he was
 On cross-legs bent,
 Never heeding
 The wind was spent.
 Round veered the weathercock,
 The sun drew in—
 And stuck was Jim
 Like a rusty pin....
 We pulled and we pulled
 From seven till twelve,
 Jim, too frightened
 To help himself.
 But all in vain.
 The clock struck one,
 And there was Jim
 A little bit gone.
 At half-past five
 You scarce could see
 A glimpse of his flapping
 Handkerchee.
 And when came noon,
 And we climbed sky-high,
 Jim was a speck
 Slip-slipping by.
 Come tomorrow,
 The neighbors say,
 He'll be past crying for;
 Poor Jim Jay.

Thus, playfully, jests Walter De la Mare, at the expense of a poor, but unacknowledged, relation. In his early work, such as Peacock Pie, De la Mare attempted to assume the child's point of view and some of the child's language (although this child would possess a vocabulary any professional critic would be proud of), and this innocence has not been lost in his later volumes, although it is becoming more and more sophisticated. Follow it through by reading from "Tired Tim", to "Melmillo", "Mocking Fairy", "Full Moon", "Suppose", "Märchen", and "Who?" and you will still note the inversions, the archaisms, the onomatopoeic sounds, the invented and nursery words, the

pattering feet, the half rhyme (like resolved dissonances in music)—all of which are used to suggest that the writer is working guilelessly in a medium only partly mastered (or perhaps even entirely unrecognized as a medium), but the effect of which has unquestionably been studied out in advance.

With this often attractive lyricist of childishness may be placed Ralph Hodgson, the lyricist of childlikeness, whose creation of the limpid, unadulterated beauty of both sound and sense in two such poems as "Eve" and "Time, You Old Gypsy Man" is alone sufficient to preserve him the same modicum of fame that is Housman's—no matter what one may think of the latter's last volume. As companions, W. J. Turner and W. H. Davies, the apostle of wonder and the super-tramp, might well accompany the other two. Even Shaw's assurance that if ever a poet was unsophisticated Davies is that poet will not suffice to remove him from the group. Read "The Two Children", "Thunderstorms", "The Mind's Liberty", "A Great Time", "A Bird's Anger", and "The Villain", and see if the same devices and the same point of view are not present as were found in De la Mare. Whether natural or artificial, the effect is the same: it is artistic—and art is always conscious and selective.

A person who has always been closely associated with De la Mare, Davies, and the rest, is Harold Monroe, of the Poetry Bookshop and The Chapbook. While their sophisticated innocence is chiefly imaginative, however, his is largely philosophical. From the first stanzas of "Strange Meetings"—

If suddenly a clod of earth should rise,
And walk about, and breathe, and speak,
and love,
How one would tremble, and in what
surprise
Gasp: "Can you move?"

I see men walking, and I always feel;
"Earth! How have you done this? What
can you be?"
I can't learn how to know men, or conceal
How strange they are to me.—

one feels the same essential spirit, attempting to simplify and rearrange ideas for easier comprehension. In such poems Monroe becomes the prophet of the significance of the insignificant, as he also does in "Every Thing"—a poem which reminds one of the old fairy tales of how the china shepherd and shepherdess talked over the family of their owners and decided to elope. Still more, however, in its ingenuous polytheistic materialism it reminds one of Rupert Brooke's "The Great Lover". Brooke, too, on his death had hardly decided whether sophistication, or sophisticated innocence, was to characterize his poetry and give it being.

The diversity of the results of the sophisticated innocent attitude are still more noticeable when certain American poets are examined—exponents of the same technic and approach, even if unconsciously so. The particular discovery of Alfred Kreymborg, the troubadour of philosophic babyhood, is that the average modern educated person scarcely ever speaks in sentences of more than six or seven consecutive words, and that the grammatical structure of these sentences would do great credit to an eight year old child. This medium is therefore eminently fitted to express deep metaphysical ideas—or better, perhaps, to suggest these ideas, which would be too weighty and meaty

even for a person with a complete command of the vocabulary contained in the ordinary unabridged dictionary. From "Mushrooms" choose "Songs," or "Scherzetto", or "To a Maltese," or "Culture"; or from "Blood of Things" choose "Worms", or "That Is"—and you will probably be willing to admit that you still "don't understand." But be careful in your choice or you might chance to run upon something in a more conventional strain and with a genuine poetic thought.

There is children's literature written from the point of view of the adult, and there is children's literature in which the child itself is supposed to be speaking, as in the *Atlantic's* recent "Diary of Opal." Much of the latter type is being done today, but some of the most interesting appears in the recent volume by Elizabeth Madox Roberts, "Under the Tree." Not long ago, Louis Untermeyer—who has perhaps praised more poets than any other person living today—used this sentence in a review of Miss Roberts's book: "Her verse is graceful where grace commands the expression, but her unforced naivete allows her to be gauche whenever awkwardness is natural." Nevertheless, one who admires Miss Roberts's work was as much as any man this side idolatry may still insist that her frequent "gaucherie" in both meter and rhyme is sophistication and not innocence—she knows the effect she wants and she goes after it consciously, like any true artist. It would not be difficult, too, to find poems which, in the care and selection of phraseology, diction, and idiom, would easily make Miss Roberts winner of all the day's awards in any "Bright Sayings of the Chil-

dren" contest. She is therefore an adult adolescent, or, if you will, an adolescent adult, but surely not a child. She is a sophisticated innocent.

At the first glance one would probably not associate Edna St. Vincent Millay with the preceding poets. Nevertheless, although she has constantly been adding new strings to her lyre, she is still what she was when she wrote the opening lines of "Renascence":

All I could see from where I stood
Was three long mountains and a wood;
I turned and looked another way,
And saw three islands in a bay....
Over these things I could not see;
These were the things that bounded
me....
And all at once things seemed so small
My breath came short, and scarce at all.

The artless and passionate artistry of this rhapsody of girlish mysticism, and of such shorter pieces as "God's World" and "The Pear Tree", makes Miss Millay one of our ranking American poets. And her first play, too, "Aria da Capo", was published in Monro's Chapbook. There are more ties between members of this hypothetical group than one first realizes.

Many other poets, widely divergent in their primary aims and practices, have caught at times the sophisticated innocent technic and have used it for various effects of realism and romance, and with varying degrees of success. Compare, for instance, Robert Frost's prefatory poem to "North of Boston", "The Pasture", with the inconceivably absurd bluntness of No. XXI of Masefield's *Lollington Downs*. The former runs:

I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;
I'll only stop to rake the leaves away
(And wait to watch the water clear, I
may):
I sha'n't be gone long.—You come too.

I'm going out to fetch the little calf
That's standing by the mother. It's so
young,
It totters when she licks it with her
tongue.
I sha'n't be gone long.—You come too.

Part of the latter is enough:

... After market it was
He beat his girl;
He liked his glass,
Old Farmer Kyrle.

Old Kyrle's son
Said to his father,
'Now, dad, you ha' done,
I'll kill you rather.'...

His father clubbed
The girl on the head.
Young Will upped
And shot him dead....

They hanged Will
As Will said,
With one thrill
They choked him dead....

She died soon.
At high tide
At full moon
Jane died....

The poems are as far apart as the poles. And yet both poets are trying to do the same thing technically: they are both trying, first of all, to make the reader forget that he is reading poetry (something which he has come to regard as difficult of comprehension, and "flowery", and remote from his own experience and language), and second to lead him back to a belief in the genuineness of the truth or beauty in their material by the simplicity of their presentation. The imaginative freshness of the romanticists and the sometimes crass vigor of the realists have both endeavored to profit by the same method.

III.

Our modern world is one of the ultra-sophistication. Many of us regret that fact, and some of us attempt to regain that old innocence which—may it be timidly suggested?—may never really have existed. In some cases the results are those which can be described by no term but that favorite one of the sophisticated innocents themselves—lovely. In other cases the results can be regarded as nothing else than frankly deplorable. But in no case should the term "sophisticated innocents" be regarded as a stigma in itself.

Here is just one more poem, "The Dew-Light":

The Dew-Man comes over the mountains
wide,
Over the deserts of sand,
With his bag of clear drops
And his brush of feathers,
He scatters brightness.
The white bunnies beg him for dew.
He sprinkles their fur....
They shake themselves,
All the time he is singing,
The unknown world is beautiful!

He polishes flowers,
Humming, "Oh, beautiful!"
He sings in the soft light
That grows out of the dew;
Out of the misty dew-light that leans
over him
He makes his song.
It is beautiful, the unknown world!

These infantile lines are an illustration of how far our modern sophisticated innocence has penetrated the poetic world. They are attributed by Grace Hazard Conkling to her daughter, Hilda Conkling, and were written when the latter was eight years old. Let Hilda look more carefully to her laurels, or she will soon be excelled in her sophisticated innocence by her superiors!

Centaur Song

By H. D.

Now that the day is done,
now that the night creeps soft
and dims the chestnut clusters'
radiant spike of flowers.
O sweet, till dawn
break through the branches
of our orchard-garden
rest in this shelter
of the osier wood and thorn.

They fall,
the apple-flowers;
nor softer grace has Aphrodite
in the heaven afar,
nor at so fair a pace
open the flower-petals
as your face bends down,
while, breath on breath,
your mouth wanders
from my mouth o'er my face.

What have I left
to bring you in this place,
already sweet with violets
(those you brought
with swathes of earliest grass,
forest and meadow balm,
flung from your giant arms
for us to rest upon.)

Fair are these petals
broken by your feet;
your horse's hooves
tread softer than a deer's;
your eyes, startled,
are like the deer eyes
while your heart
trembles more than the deer.

O earth, O god,
O forest, stream or river,
what shall I bring
that all the day hold back,
that Dawn remember love
and rest upon her bed
and Zeus, forgetful not of Danae or **Maia**,
bid the stars shine forever?

Desert Noon

By ROSE HENDERSON

Glitter of sun on the hot, white whorls of sand,
Wind-frayed yuccas towering gaunt and still;
And a blinding glamour of sky, like an infinite hand
Blazoning its will.

Whisper of wind in the wiry, bleached bunch brass,
Flashing lizards as ashen as alkali;
And far on the mesa a rider and pack-mule pass,
Like beetle and fly.

A creamy slaver of bloom from the yucca stalks,
Sudden stirring of spines like angry bees;
And something that eerily, stealthily stays and mocks,
Something that laughs and flees.

Three Poems

By RICHARD KIRK

I'll Keep My Grief

I'll keep my grief, nor throw away
What I may use another day;
Belike one day, the cupboard bare,
I'll find this bone to gnaw on there.

The Alien

Who is the alien? Is it he
Whom once the sea
Severed from us who crossed
In the vanguard of the host?

He is the alien who rears
Intolerable barriers;
Who lives in a walled town;—
Not he who beats them down.

Yes, You Must Be Happy

I must be happy now because
I used to tell the wind by straws
And now at such devices mock
Because I have a weathercock.

Reviews

PARIS DANCES

Les Bals de Paris, par André Warnod

Avec Dessins de l'Auteur, les Editions G. Crés et Cie, Paris.

ANDRÉ WARNOD is a well known name in this genre. He has published books on different phases of Parisian amusement and on various antiquities of the city. In *Comoedia*, the theatrical, musical, artistic, and literary journal of Paris, his name is signed to many of the reports on current celebrations. There is a great deal of Paris compressed into his latest book. Many phases of the current dancing enthusiasm are of course presented. But there is more. Of the famous old public balls (never quite to be called by our name of "dance halls") we are given not only the present atmosphere, but the past history, the anecdotes and traditions. For those who are not familiar with the delightful *bals musettes* of Paris, the book which is full of specific information about these curious little haunts might serve as a practical guide. And there is a lively description of the different sorts of more modern and luxurious places which the French call *dancings*. Beside a review of permanent spectacles which may be seen or participated in at any time, the book includes detailed accounts of the great celebrations in Paris: Mi-Careme, Mardi-Gras, the Fourteenth of July, Quatz-Arts, and others. The whole is saved from becoming stupidly statistical by the evident pleasure of the author in the details which he assembles and by the spirited and delightful little

drawings which he himself has made to accompany the text.

He takes as a key-note to the description of the *bals de Paris* the expression: "Tell me how you dance and I shall tell you who you are"; and assumes that the public ball is a mirror reflecting the soul of mankind. The apaches, the people in domestic employ, the students of the military academy, the artists, the bourgeois of wealth—all have their special milieu in the dancing world, with appropriate music, ranging from the nostalgic wail of the accordeon to the exotic clamor of the jazz band.

Of the famous old *Bal Bullier* in the Latin Quarter we have a view reaching from the early days of the *Closiere de Lilas-Jardin Bullier* when in the afternoon lovers and poets sought the shade of the trees, and idle couples the bal-ancoires; when women brought their needle work and men haunted the billiard tables—to the present moment of after-war activity when the regulation French orchestra is relieved by a jazz band and the dancing is continuous. In the *Moulin de la Galette* whose evolution has been recorded in the work of Steinlen, Toulouse-Lautrec, and Renoir, we have an expression of the native Montmartre: no champagne, no cabarets, but a native quarter totally divorced from the showy aspects of those establishments surrounding Place Pigalle. The *Moulin Rouge*, symbol of Parisian night life to all the world and so vivid an inspiration to Toulouse-Lautrec, after being burned and rebuilt is still capable of awakening lyric re-

sponse in the natures of people like Arthur Symons. And there is the *Bal Tabarin*, a maze of different colored lights and the scene of multi-colored spectacles, with a *sous-sol* of mechanical pianos, shooting galleries, and shows of a very special appeal. Of quite another world is the *Bal Wagram*, the paradise of those in domestic service: maids and cooks often in finery which is passing through a second incarnation; valets, chauffeurs; soldiers sometimes, and firemen without their helmets; butcher's boys, grocers, fruit-sellers. There we find loud speech, flushed cheeks, cheap perfume, now and then a whiff of an exquisite odor borrowed from the dressing table of the mistress of some lady's maid. Around the Ecole Militaire are the various balls frequented by the cadets: noisy and gay but restrained under the French sense of what is good order and brought to a close by the sounding of the hour to return to barracks.

Most distinctive of all the dancing places in Paris are the little *bals musettes*. The word *musette* was originally applied to an instrument something like the bag-pipe, which in earlier times was popular among the aristocracy as well as the humbler classes; and it is from this instrument that the little dance places of the working people and of the underworld receive their name. Most of them now have the accordeon as the typical instrument of their dance music. Now and then a single street presents a whole series of these tiny *bals*, the lights and music pouring out into the thoroughfare, the interiors crowded with whirling couples, the doors and sidewalks filled with spectators. Usually there are benches inside

where drinks are served, and one end of the room, separated from the rest by a wooden railing, is reserved for dancing. The orchestra, which may be a single accordeon or may consist of banjo, accordeon, and drums (with all the attachments), is usually set on a high narrow little balcony exactly like a shelf nailed to the upper part of the wall. In the haunts of the people from Auvergne there is regular folk dancing executed with exactness and enthusiasm. The typical *bal* of the working people is very correct, the couples dancing with propriety and showing little eccentricity except in an extraordinary amount of pivoting and whirling. Warnod has accumulated innumerable details about these smaller dance places: the peculiarities of different localities and classes, and the history of famous old places which have now disappeared.

Of the artists' balls the Quatz-Arts is, of course, the most brilliant. It is amusing to read the legal process which was brought to bear against its pagan gaieties in 1893. The court procedure has much of the solemn foolishness to be discovered in similar more recent procedures in America for the suppression of certain books. The Latin Quarter on that occasion was in a state of revolution: street battles, traffic held up, and lights cut off are details which remain in the memory of old inhabitants. The result was practically acquittal; and the Quatz-Arts, though temporarily suspended during the war, is still thriving. André Warnod recreates for us the spectacles presented by these yearly celebrations and is thoroughly in the spirit of their fundamental joyousness: the advance of the

ateliers through the city, storming fashionable restaurants, springing upon passing vehicles, dancing everywhere; then the gorgeously colored loges, monstrous gods and goddesses, huge animals, banners, lances, swords and bucklers, giant head-dresses, feathers, draperies, jewels—a magnificent range of form and color unified by some definite historical scheme; the parade of the great cortege around the enormous hall; the exhibition of models for the prizes; the continuous and deafening din of orchestral instruments, dancing feet, shouting voices, clattering bottles; the return of all those who have survived the night's gayety to the courtyard of the Ecole des Beaux Arts in the morning for a final celebration, including the climbing of statues and a bath in the fountain.

The final section of Warnod's book deals with modern dancing in a manner curiously amusing to the American reader. The scholarly consideration of *le fox-trot* and *le shimmy* is sure to awaken mirth, especially when an elaborate etymological origin of "shimmy" is quoted—an explanation which shows the word to have come from an expression "she shake" and "me shake" shortened to "sche me shake" among the negroes of Louisiana! But the French attitude toward the Tango, simplifying it to the ability of the casual dancer and keeping it always on the program, is certainly more sensible than ours. The chapter on jazz bands, describing several different phases of that music so alluring to the European mind, penetrates to the fundamental appeal of jazz music. He begins with the early deafening brutal jazz played solidly with a firm underlying melody. Thence

through the tricks of disassociation with the musicians literally wandering about while the different instruments pick up and let drop small jerky themes, crashing into a noisy ensemble at the end. And finally the nostalgic, wailing, soft, insinuating jazz of later development. The following paragraph translated hastily from the text is a passing example of the vivid writing to be found in this chapter:

"The jazz band—it is the exhaust of the machine, the vibration of the automobile, the grinding of the train upon the rail, the banging bell of the passing street car; it is the railroad wreck, the boiler explosion, the screaming siren of the lost vessel; and all of this swept along in an infernal frenzied uproar which mingles everything and plunges everything into the pitiless and raucous din of the clackson; the jazz band is a joke-cataclysm which makes you burst out laughing. But suddenly in the crash of these animated machines arises a wail, a nostalgic plaint, acute, thrilling, insinuating, pulling taut the most sensitive and hidden fibres of the soul; and as this poignant strain arises, there arise in the imagination far-off countries which one will never see—invitations to impossible voyages."

He describes the large and brilliant dancing places of the new regime; but rightly presents as much more typical those tiny intimate "bonbonnieres" where everything is delicate and precious, where the rooms are bathed in a softened light, where the most perfectly modulated colors and the most sumptuous materials have been chosen for the walls and furniture, where the air is charged with subtle perfumes, and there rises the subdued plaint of the banjo

and the soft lamentations of the clarinet.

After a funny recital of the disadvantages inherent in that ridiculous old custom, the "surprise party", taken over of late, name and all, by the French, the book closes with a comparison between old and new dances. And here the author points out with considerable humor the recurrent scandalized horror among conservative members of the community at the introduction of new dances, in any century. He quotes several amusing passages: frantic exhortations of 1856, calling upon all "Christian virgins" to abhor the immoral and destructive influences of the waltz and polka, pointing out at the same time that any young lady who really did *polk* was not, strictly speaking, a virgin! Presupposing that the dancers of immediate posterity will look upon our day as quite mild and moral, he produces some entertaining speculations as to what will be the scandals of fifty years hence.

Altogether a jolly good book: entertaining drawings, lots of information, much amusement, and a pleasant dose of the French spirit.

FLORENCE GILLIAM.

FLESH AND FAERY

The Captain's Doll, by D. H. Lawrence

(Thomas Seltzer: 1923.)

I PRESENT no very fresh observation in the statement that mystic and sensualist are frequent co-inhabitants of the same person. That identification I find in Mr. Lawrence and in his work. Quite long ago, in that chapter called *The Lemon Gardens* from *Twilight in Italy*, he presented, under the cloak of meditations upon the secret soul of

Italy, the body of a rather complete mystical system. For properties there were Blake's tiger, and the very Christian idea that the hunter, the tiger, triumphs only in the resistance of his prey: and that, in fine, when the victim yields to his destiny, that destiny is nullified and its triumph voided. Now I shall refer you to the second novelette in *The Captain's Doll*, wherein Henry Grenfel goes hunting and ponders shadowily thereon: "Your own soul, as a hunter, has gone out to fasten on the soul of the deer, even before you see any deer. And the soul of the deer fights to escape. . . . It is a subtle, profound battle of wills, which takes place in the invisible." There speaks the mystic. And for that second quality of the dual nature, Lawrence writes in the next paragraph: "And it was as a young hunter that he wanted to bring down March (the girl) as his quarry, to make her his wife."

Mr. Lawrence has created a book of symbols. It is subtitled *Three Novelettes*. The first concerns that doll which the Countess Hannele made of her Scottish captain, which is the figure every woman makes of her man, gay and diminutive, intimate, and rather absurd. Hepburn resents the figure, and it is Hannele's image which submits in the end. But I cannot quite congratulate Mr. Lawrence on his cavalier disposal of the firm Mrs. Hepburn; she breaks her neck, discreetly, in a fall from a high window. The probable, says Aristotle, is to be preferred. Alternatively, the death of Banford in that second novelette, republished from *The Dial*, *The Fox*, is impressive and inevitable. The thing is beautifully done in a sustained minor; it is like an old wives' tale whispered against the fire.

But that third relation, *The Ladybird*, is far and away superior to any other in the volume. The bright love, the atavistic idealism, of the English Apsley finds subtle contrast in the dark love of that spiritual outlaw, the Austrian Count Dionys, who is a little, very beautifully, mad. And in Lady Daphne Lawrence has given us one of his very rare portraits of the woman fragile. She stands between those two like Pincesse du Pays de la Porcelaine, until she stands over against the Count. As for the Ladybird, it is Dionys' ancestral crest; and the Ladybird flies away home.

Like March in *The Fox*, Lawrence "wished to paint curvilinear swans on porcelain, . . . or else make a marvelous fire-screen by processes of elaborate cabinet work". Those images accurately body forth their author's later manner: it is hard and clean and colored, all delicately interwrought. Occasionally his emotional method betrays him; regard, for example, the third paragraph on page 217. But the writing in general is tight and fine. Mr. Lawrence has discovered reticence. It is very good for him.

VINCENT MCHUGH.

THE INTELLECTUAL MUSE

Poems, by George Santayana

(Selected and Revised by the Author)

(Scribner, 1923)

The Shadow Eater, By Benjamin De Casseres

Preface by Don Marquis. Illustrated by Wallace Smith

(American Library Service, 1923)

POETRY is generally written by the philosophically illiterate. In all the volumes of verse printed in the course of a year in this country or any, course of a year in this country or any,

passages that are intellectually memorable, and it is seldom in literature that poets of any stature emerge whose work in its completeness reveals an approach to wisdom. It is, therefore, notable when two such books as "Poems" by George Santayana and "The Shadow Eater," by Benjamin De Casseres (both reprints, to be sure) are published in America.

There is a richness, a dignity and a restraint in Mr. Santayana's verse which has made it dear to all discerning readers for three decades. And it is by no means improbable that a certain amount of his output will outlast much of the jingling and emotional verse of the period which is rated above it by many contemporary critics. For George Santayana is a figure of major proportions in the intellectual life of the modern age. That clear mind of his has few peers past or present. And in prose and verse he has erected a monument that is as likely to persist as any constructed in this period. As he points out in the preface to this revised edition of his poems, his verses, like those of Michael Angelo, "form a part of the expression of his mind."

I quote from that preface the following passages which should be handed round:

"Verse is one of the traditions of literature. Like the orders of Greek architecture, the sonnet or the couplet or the quatrain are better than anything else that has been devised to serve the same function... There is an elevation in poetic diction, just because it is consecrated and archaic; a pomp as of a religious procession, without which certain intuitions would lose all their grace and dignity.... To say that what was good once is good no longer is to give too much importance to chronology. Aesthetic fashions may change, losing as much beauty at one end as they gain at the other, but innate taste continues to recognize its affinities, however re-

note, and need never change. Mask and buskin are often requisite in order to transport what is great in human experience out of its embosoming littleness. They are inseparable from finality, from perception of the ultimate. Perhaps it is just this tragic finality that English poets do not have and do not relish; they feel it to be rhetorical. But verse after all is a form of rhetoric, as is all speech and even thought; a means of pouring experience into a mould which fluid experience cannot supply, and of transmuting emotion into ideas, by making it articulate."

There are not many sonnet sequences in English so good as Mr. Santayana's, and very few that surpass them. I quote one sonnet at random,

As in the midst of battle there is room
For thoughts of love, and in foul sin for mirth;

As gossips whisper of a trinket's worth
Spied by the death-bed's flickering candle-gloom;

As in the crevices of Caesar's tomb
The sweet herbs flourish on a little earth:
So in this great disaster of our birth
We can be happy and forget our doom.
For morning, with a ray of tenderest joy
Gilding the iron heaven, hides the truth,
And evening gently woos us to employ
Our grief in idle catches. Such is youth;
Till from that summer's trance we wake,
to find

Despair before us, vanity behind.

Everyone knows "The Rustic at the Play," I hope, but I am sure all are willing to re-read it here:

Our youth is like a rustic at the play
That cries aloud in simple-hearted fear,
Curses the villain, shudders at the fray,
And weeps before the maiden's wreathed bier.

Yet once familiar with the changeful show,

He starts no longer at a brandished knife,

But, his heart chastened at the sight of woe,

Ponders the mirrored sorrows of his life.
So tutored too, I watch the moving art
Of all this magic and impassioned pain
That tells the story of the human heart
In a false instance, such as poets feign;
I smile, and keep within the parchment furled

That prompts the passions of this strutting world.

I quote in concluding this notice of the appearance of Mr. Santayana's

poems the following from his remarkable translation of "Art," by Theophile Gautier:

All things return to dust
Save beauties fashioned well.

The bust
Outlasts the citadel.

Oft doth the ploughman's heel,
Breaking an ancient clod,

Reveal
A Caesar or a god.

The gods, too, die, alas!
But deathless and more strong
Than brass
Remains the sovereign song.

Chisel and carve and file,
Till thy vague dream imprint
Its smile
On the unyielding flint.

It would be an injustice to Benjamin De Casseres to say that he writes verse well, for he does not. He is far more expert in prose than in prosody. If one wishes to assert that "The Shadow Eater" is successful as artistry, one must qualify the statement by saying one is speaking of prose. If by verse one means language which is characterized by harmony, there is not much in the volume. But if one refers simply to imagery, there is much; and if one refers to impassioned utterance, strongly rhythmized, there is a great deal. One feels, however, that impassioned utterance of this sort is rather a beautiful prose. It does not satisfy the aesthetic requirements of verse.

As I remarked in the beginning, it is the intelligence which suffuses "The Shadow Eater" that makes it a volume of note. One reads it with admiration for the seer who pens it. It is after all a book on metaphysics, by a capable metaphysician. When one has finished reading it, one feels that one has been in communion with a man who is kin to

the sages. His mind is no doubt murky—for he is whipped hard by all the knouts of sense and is a creature of emotions that are extremely recalcitrant—but into the turmoil of his imaginings leap lightning flashes of intuitive wisdom. In De Casseres' head there is a fiend or angel in a cloud.

Poets who are merely poets, and readers of poetry who are interested merely in poetry, will perhaps not enjoy "The Shadow Eater" to the full. Intelligent readers who are interested in the play of the human mind upon the problem of being, will find it a rare addition to American commentary upon existence.

I quote a few lines at random:

I toss high, I toss hither and thither the
whole universe, the hollow ball of desire.

* * *

And Terror and Guilt were old shapes of
me

* * *

Time lies cataleptic in my brain:
Eternity alone reigns there.
Infinite space has shrunk to a single
point of fire,
From whose heart radiate the trackless
voids.

* * *

Like sunlight, I touch all things, yet
nothing do I gain;
I am neither richer nor poorer than I was
at the beginning of things.
Passion, hope, pain, grief, leave me un-
changed (I shed universes and moult
cycles).

* * *

To the eye of the world I am tossed like
a cork on rough waters,
But I know I have stood Here since the
Day of the Primal Appearance,
Transfixed in supreme wonder,
Rigid in pride, dissenting, unmoved.

* * *

I hear laughter and there is a feasting,
and another marriage is made—
A conspiracy has been formed to accouch
another being.

Intruder in Time, enclaved for a mo-
ment, flinty, brittle,
Flying the flag of Rebellion, chanting
my hates and my dreams.

* * *

And love they have sanctified because of
its delicate tickle

* * *

Brooding over my brain, that mirror of
the implacable trivial

* * *

I am a shadow that is more real than a
substance

The drawings by Wallace Smith are excellent. The book has a spooky portrait of De Casseres by Marius de Zayas as frontispiece. And Don Marquis' introduction is a deservedly high tribute to "one of the very few American poets writing any form of verse at any time able to rise up and walk into the cosmopolis where the great intellects of all times dwell and sit down among them with the air of belonging there."

J. M.

PUPPETS AND PIRANDELLO

Three Plays, by Luigi Pirandello

Translated by Edward Storer and Arthur Livingston

(E. P. Dutton & Co., 1922)

IN this Signor Pirandello, after himself, one is chiefly reminded of the author of "Pygmalion". That is a dangerous implication in these days when Capek and the others are so vehemently *not* Shaw. But the analogy endures. Pirandello's style, like Shaw's, is the absence of style; it partakes somewhat of that incisive clarity, that purchase of lucidity at any cost, which is fathered by a long French tradition, typical in Rousseau. But it lacks the paternal

music; its pattern is the imperceptibly translated speech of life. And Pirandello, like Shaw, capers before his own mirror. (Witness the very Shavian grimace of mockery for its author in "Six Characters".)

The Irish vegetarian is incomparably the more brilliant, but Signor Pirandello has passed him on the road beyond logic. What M. Thibaut said of D'Aurévilly applies: "But one must do him the justice to say that he never hesitated to place his fancies above reason". The ultimate stride in twenty-league boots were no greater than the distance between the sentimental chronicler of provincial society of "Sicilian Limes" and the accomplished lightning ironist of "Right You Are!". He who learned philosophy at Bonn and a greater University knows that abstractions irreducible to symbol or intimacy have no place in art.

We are given, first "Six Characters in Search of An Author", introduced to America by the editors of "Broom", already come and gone upon the stage of the Theatre Guild. To a company at morning rehearsal Six Characters from the Comedy Life enter in quest of the manager. After a denial, he consents to hear their case. The Father, a clever man (Pirandello himself), recounts the complexities of his relations with two women, one of these the daughter of his wife; his speech is punctuated with quotations and denials from the others, each assured of the unique justice of his individual perspective. The manager agrees to produce their life-play, and the Characters begin rehearsal, while the Prompter jots stenographic notes for a "book". But Life has a script of his own; therein the Boy creeps to the

wings and shoots himself. Here the Comedy breaks up in clamor with the last shout of the manager: "Pretence? Reality? To hell with it all! Never in my life has such a thing happened to me. I've lost a whole day over these people, a whole day." Consider it as one likes: Narrowly, as an arraignment of the theatre; more broadly, as an essay upon the relations between art and life; or most liberally, as a universal symbolic interlude from life itself.

The gist of "Henry IV" is contained in these words of the first and titular personage: "This dress . . . which is for me the evident, involuntary caricature of that other continuous, everlasting masquerade of which we are the involuntary puppets . . . when, without knowing it, we mask ourselves with that which we appear to be . . . oh, that dress of theirs, this masquerade of theirs, of course, we must forgive it them, since they do not yet see it is identical with themselves . . ." Here is a thesis, omnipresent, which the author has perhaps overworked: That life is a puppet-show whose presiding Mountebank allows no real inter-communication between his characters; one cannot know one's self, quite; one can only guess at one's neighbor. The Tragedy is prodigal in approximation of those qualities of emotion which Aristotle recommends. One senses that one is intended to feel pity here, and there, terror; but the effect is abortive. Only the last gesture of the "King" is really successful. Again, the matter terminates in a fatal swordplay; Pirandello is like Hergesheimer in his fondness for the legitimate melodrama.

Cabell might have subtitled "Right You Are! (If You Think So)". A

Comedy of Curiosity. It is a study in relatives, a denial that the abstract Truth is ever accessible. Against a background of provincial society, with its insatiable rapacity for the "facts" in the Ponza case, Laudisi jumps into relief, the tart mocker, the faithless one who believes only in unbelief. Here is Pirandello upon the boards, as he is the Father of "Six Characters", and in a lesser degree, "Henry IV". If he has a fault, it is perhaps this trick of loving the characters which are himself too well. For Laudisi, like the others, justifies himself; nothing is divulged, nothing really proven, and the Parable closes to the note of his prolonged laughter.

Walpole of Strawberry Hill wrote that life is comedy to those who think, tragedy to those who feel. Marsden Hartley postscribes his dictum that the play of the child is tragi-comedy. Pirandello, who manages naïveté with sophistication, approximates that child.

VINCENT MCHUGH.

SHARP AS VINEGAR, SMOOTH AS SILK

Kai Lung's Golden Hours, by Ernest Bramah

(Geo. H. Doran: New York)

HILAIRE BELLOC, in the preface to *Kai Lung's Golden Hours*, calls it, "something worth doing and done—a thing intended, wrought out, completed, and established". Which is not overstatement of this unusual book of satire. In an age when fine satire is so badly needed and so infrequent of appearance, Ernest Bramah's book is doubly welcome. Upon a time-honored framework somewhat reminiscent of

the Arabian Nights, and using plots that have done valiant and frequent service, the author has nevertheless contrived an ironic Odyssey of amazing originality. He uses the involved and flowery Chinese idiom to lightly mask a keen and savage sardonicism.

Kai Lung is an engaging vagabond story-teller who modestly admits that "in one form or another, all stories that exist are within my mental grasp. Thus equipped, there is no arising emergency for which I am unprepared." The author then flings Kai Lung into one distressing situation after another and lets his hero talk himself out of each one.

Ernest Bramah very clearly sees the world we live in and refuses to be taken in by its conventional buncombe. Those who remember the numerous "strategic and orderly" retreats indulged in during the first few years of the World War will appreciate this paragraph from *Kai Lung's Golden Hours*.

"An outside cause had further contributed to make this period one of the most animated in the annals of Ho Chow for not only was the city, together with the rest of the Imperishable Empire, celebrating a great and popular victory, but as a direct consequence of that event, the Sublime Emperor himself was holding court at no great distance away. An armed and turbulent rabble of illiterate barbarians had suddenly appeared in the north and, not giving a really sufficient indication of their purpose, had traitorously assaulted the capital. Had he followed the prompting of his own excessive magnanimity the charitable Monarch would have refused to take any notice whatsoever of a puny and contemptible

foe, but so unmistakable became the wishes of the Ever-victorious Army that, yielding to their importunity, he placed himself at their head and resolutely led them backward. Had the opposing army been more intelligent, this crafty move would certainly have enticed them on to the plains, where they would have fallen an easy victim to the Imperial troops and all perished miserably. Owing to their low standard of reasoning, however, the mule-like invaders utterly failed to grasp the advantage which, as far as the appearances tended, they might reasonably be supposed to reap by an immediate pursuit. They remained incapably within the capital slavishly increasing its defences, while the Ever-victorious lurked resourcefully in the neighborhood of Ho Chow, satisfied that with so dull-witted an adversary they could, if the necessity arose, go still further."

If there is any marked fault in the book, it is the too plentiful use of old saws and stock aphorisms. But wise sayings are part of the mechanics of the Chinese style, and it is hard to invent new ones. As to the unoriginality of plots, the author quite calmly and boldly appropriates one from Lamb's *Essays of Elia*. In the tale of the Willow Plate Embellishment, he simply takes the Roast Pig story, changes it very slightly and, curiously, produces a copy which is a vast improvement on the original. However, Ernest Bramah is obviously concerned with penetration of and amusement at life's stupidities, so that plot, story, and structure are used merely as means to an end. Yet he is so consummate an artist that while he scatters vitriol, he still manages to be vastly entertaining.

OUR SHORT STORY COMES OF AGE

The Advance of the American Short Story, by Edward J. O'Brien

(Dodd, Mead & Co. \$2.00)

IT is rather curious that the American short story is still largely considered a child, perhaps a clever child, even precocious at times, but only with the precocity of a child. Even the vast reading public which enjoys its antics in magazine form won't have it on its sedate shelves in book form. Practically no collection of short stories has proved a best seller, excepting, of course well-bound editions of widely proclaimed masters, such as Poe and O. Henry, to whom the appellation of "classics" has given the required dignity. No one, excepting writers on short-story technique, has taken the American short story seriously.

It is curious because our short story deserves serious consideration, indubitably more than our drama and quite as much as our novel. It is light and sentimental and artificial. It has developed a technique at the expense of content. It has gone in for quantity production. But in this inexhaustible quantity there have been sound pieces, single, isolated, rare, but genuine. We have overlooked them. We have condemned the whole quantity and missed the significant individual.

Edward J. O'Brien reminds us of these significant individuals in "The advance of the American Short Story." Between Irving and Waldo Frank there have been many who found the short story a congenial medium in which to say something vital and beautiful. Some,

like William Austin, Rose Terry Cooke, and Stephen Crane, have been either entirely or almost entirely forgotten. Others, like Mark Twain, Jack London, O. Henry, and Ambrose Bierce, have been warped and stunted. But their example has not been lost; their influence has contributed to the ultimate maturity of America's most characteristic literary form.

Mr. O'Brien, who for the past eight years has been searching through the enormous output of short stories for "the fresh, living current which flows through the best American work" and collecting his find in annual volumes of "Best Stories," lists four heresies which have retarded the development of the American short story.—"the heresy of types, the heresy of local color, the heresy of 'plot', and the heresy of the surprise ending." To our lack of skill in psychology and limited interest in character he lays the heresy of types; to Bret Harte he traces the heresy of local color; to Poe's "somewhat meretricious detective stories" and to "the more brittle anecdotes of Bret Harte" we owe the heresy of "plot"; to "O. Henry who would seem to have vulgarized a weakness of Aldrich, Stockton, and Bunner" we owe the heresy of the surprise ending.

It is possible to take issue with Mr. O'Brien on many points. His condemnation of Bret Harte as "the wicked fairy at the christening of the short story" is a bit too sweeping and his praise of O. Henry a bit too indiscriminate. If Bret Harte bestowed upon our short story the "fatal gifts" of type (forgetting for the moment the larger cause of our limited interest in character) and of local color, what can be said

for O. Henry's influence on plot-juggling, on tricky "crises," "climaxes" and endings? What can be said for his influence on a whole generation of superficial clowns, of dabblers in flippant cleverness? Nor can O'Brien's estimate of the influence of Henry James be accepted without challenge. It is not quite as apparent in the work of our writers as he would have us believe. Nor can Hergesheimer be classed merely as a "regional" writer. And then there are the inevitable points of omission. If Mary Brecht Pulver and Achmed Abdullah and Rose Cohen and Edna Bryner are included, why aren't Ben Hecht and Djuna Barnes and Conrad Aiken? What governs inclusion? Is it quantity, quality, age or mere random remembrance of names? Incidentally, the publishers' blurb mentions Sinclair Lewis among those whose work the book discusses. Lewis' contribution to the short-story is insignificant, of course, and Mr. O'Brien ignores it. But how account for the blurb? Is it an example of naiveté which thought of Lewis because the chapter discussing our most popular story writers is entitled "Main Street"?

Perhaps the greatest failing of the book is what our professors of technique would call a lack of unity. The procession of writers is not linked. Individual chapters are brilliant, particularly those on Henry James and Sherwood Anderson. But what relation have Sherwood Anderson and Waldo Frank to the long list of precursors? The rise of the American short story has not been as phenomenal as it is usually assumed to have been, nor even its vulgarization. It has been a slow groping and growth. Maupassant came

to interpret French life in crisp dramatic little tales—but there had been Balzac and Flaubert and a studded past. Chekhov rose to reflect and interpret in mellow, colorful little stories the life of a paradoxical people—but there were Goncharov and Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy and Garshin. Anderson has risen to express himself and through him the brooding, rebellious heart of provincial America—has it been a case of “out of nothing into nowhere?” Whatever answers we may find to these questions, even as to whether our Chekhov has truly arisen, one thing is clear, as Mr. O'Brien's book shows. It is that our short story has reached maturity.

H. BRYLLION FAGN.

ANTOINE THE FIRST OF THE INSURGENTS

Mes Souvenirs sur le Théâtre Libre,
Par André Antoine

(Arthème Fayard et Cie., Editeurs, Paris)

ANDRÉ ANTOINE, the founder of the French Théâtre Libre and the forerunner of the art theatre movement in Europe and America, has undertaken the writing of a trilogy to present in detail three phases of the same effort. These phases are: first, from 1887 to 1895 at the Théâtre Libre the struggle against the tenets of the existing theatre; second, from 1896 to 1906 at the Théâtre Antoine for the conquest of the public at large; and third, from 1906 to 1914 at the Odéon the final struggle against official traditions and administrative routine. With the close of this “final struggle” Antoine definitely retired from the discouraging game of the theatre as he found it; and though there is still a theatre bearing his name, though he has done work for the cinema,

and his critical articles appear constantly in the Paris press, he has resolutely refused to have anything further to do with the stage as an active director. Only last season he consented to undertake the *mise-en-scène* of Bernstein's great poetic drama, “Judith, the greatest concession he has made in that direction.

In the introduction to the first volume of these *Souvenirs* Antoine sums up the situation of the French theatre in 1887. The great trinity—Augier, Dumas, and Sardou—were in absolute possession of the French stage. The battle already won for the naturalists in the novel, for the impressionists in painting, and for the Wagnerians in music, was now only beginning in the theatre.

A childhood experience of Antoine's—an evening spent in the prompter's box—initiating him at once into the secrets of stage presentation, instead of destroying his illusions, added zest to his awakening interest in the stage. His first permanent job in a bookshop on the rue Jacob, in the heart of the Rive Gauche section of Paris, plunged him into the center of the world of publishers and books. In this period he reserved his lunch money for book buying and spent the noon hour with his nose in the boxes of old book-sellers along the quais, with occasional excursions to the expositions given in the Beaux Arts just two steps away from his shop. The first step toward a connection with the theatre came with an appointment to the claque at the Odéon, where in later years an appointment to the directorship brought him into contact with the very same chief of paid applause. During this time his ardent attendance upon plays resulted in the actual memorizing

of those parts which fired his imagination. A course in declamation and a close study of the classics (at that time largely neglected) brought him into such verbal familiarity with the great rôles that fifteen years later at the Odéon he could prompt the members of his company entirely from memory.

By 1886 Antoine had completed his five years of military service and was a minor employee of the Gas Company at 150 francs a month, doing odd jobs at night to earn a little extra money. In this manner he was working thirteen or fourteen hours a day, when by chance he became associated with one of the many small groups who were giving plays as a pastime. For, he says, people acted then, as they dance now. With his own reawakened interest in acting and his feeling for something other than the hackneyed repertoire characteristic of such amateur associations, began the activities which led to the foundation of the now famous Théâtre Libre. Becoming involved in the direction of a new program in which the name of Zola was to figure and finding the backing of his little dramatic circle suddenly withdrawn, he discovered himself thrust into the position of undertaking an important step on his own responsibility. To have told him on that day that he was destined to play a part in the revolution of dramatic art would have been to make him laugh indeed.

After the advance explanations, the *Souvenirs* proceed in the manner of a Journal, each incident or comment being set down under its own date and with the point of view of the moment. The early struggles of Antoine and the Théâtre Libre make thoroughly human reading. To begin with, the rehearsals

had to be held in a little bistro back-room most of whose space was already filled with a huge billiard table; and this place was only available on condition that each member of the cast buy a drink. Since the players, most of them employed during the day in more or less humble positions, could not be expected to make this outlay, Antoine himself, by omitting his dinner on these occasions, managed to pay the whole sum. They succeeded in getting a few advance newspaper notices; but the association of Antoine's name in the daily press with these non-commercial activities did not aid his standing with the Gas Company officials, and he was afraid to ask for time off to gather the properties for his first production. Also there was no money to rent them. Thus five o'clock of the afternoon before the dress rehearsal saw Antoine dragging in a handcart the dining room furniture lent by his mother for the first mise-en-scene. After the success of this first production the organization graduated into a vacant ground-floor apartment for their rehearsals, and visiting authors sat on its one piece of furniture—an old trunk. Success continued and at the next production a whole set of literary and theatrical celebrities elbowed each other on the old wooden benches.

But recognition meant only an increase of pace and intensity in the struggle. There was temptation too. Porel, then director of the Odéon, sent for the young innovator and warning him that his project could not be an eventual success, offered him a place as an actor in the Odéon company. Overwhelmed at letting escape such an opportunity, the realization of all his youthful dreams, Antoine nevertheless

held to the engagements he had undertaken in announcing a season's program. He added that if Porel were of the same mind next year, he would be only too happy to accept! To carry out his cherished program he must contrive to get appointments with literary men during the noon hour and rush breathless to some corner of Paris and back while he was supposed to be eating lunch. The culmination of this kind of frantic activity came with the writing of 1,300 subscription letters and delivering them by hand. This latter task meant walking the streets of Paris all night. The last letter delivered was at the house of Clemenceau in the Avenue Montaigne at 6 o'clock in the morning; and here he was so nearly asleep that it took him five minutes to find the letter box. That morning at 9 o'clock he was on duty at the Gas Company office. His journal for the day reads: "I committed today a folly the consequences of which may be incalculable." At 9:30 that morning he had made a decision, handed in a letter of resignation, and walked out of the Gas Company Office—to the stupefaction of the concierge. And a month later he had not received a single response to his 1,300 letters. Nevertheless the rallying of a few faithful supporters achieved the installation of the *Théâtre Libre* in a small headquarters consisting of workshop and salon furnished on credit. This became Antoine's personal lodgings also.

The succeeding years mark the growth of the *Théâtre Libre* into greater and greater renown as an insurgent against theatrical officialdom, as a laboratory for the development of more intelligent realism in acting and mise-

en-scene, and as a means of introduction for the newer literary men of the day. In the years from 1887 to 1890 the *Comédie Française*, *Odéon*, *Gymnase*, and *Vaudeville* altogether produced only 164 new plays. During that time the *Théâtre Libre* alone produced 125. Antoine had to steer a perilous course between ardent and jealous literary cliques, each claiming the right to his undivided interest; but he bravely preserved an eclectic policy. There is a good deal of antiquarian charm in the off-hand contemporary references to names then new and since become well known—Porto Riche, Lavedan, Becque, Brieux, Gemier, Darzens—and in the story of the discovery and introduction to Paris, of plays by Tolstoi, Ibsen, Bjornson, Strindberg, and Hauptmann.

Following Antoine's example, Free Theatres were founded in London, in Berlin, Munich, Copenhagen, and other Continental cities. Antoine and his company were honored when they made European tours. But the financial struggle was always a losing one. The autumn of 1894 saw the company stranded in Rome, Antoine with a few sous in his pocket and a hundred thousand francs of debt awaiting him in Paris. Thus ends, he says, the *Odyssey* of the *Théâtre Libre*. But almost thirty years later in the season of 1922-23 at the *Théâtre Champs Elysées* in Paris, Stanislawski of the Moscow Art Theatre hailed Antoine as the illustrious predecessor of them all, in the development of what is now called the modern theatre. The recognition today accorded Antoine is a welcome aftermath to those discouragements which seemed so overwhelming back in the nineties.

FLORENCE GILLIAM.

MORE LIGHT ON CEZANNE

*Paul Cezanne, by Ambroise Vollard**(Translated by Harold L. Van Doren)**(Nicholas Brown: New York)*

IT is exceedingly strange that so little is actually known about Cezanne, the fountain-head of modern art. There have been in French only the books by Joachim Gasquet and Ambroise Vollard, in German the book by Maier-Graeffe, and nothing in English save an occasional magazine article. Now thanks to Harold L. Van Doren, Ambroise Vollard's book has been translated.

Undoubtedly this scarcity of Cezanne biographical data may be traceable to the isolated and secluded existence of the Hermit of Aix. Hence the Vollard book, slight as it may be, is a welcome contribution, particularly because the author sedulously avoids the pseudo-

aesthetic evaluations which of late have greeted the appearance of anything new in art. Vollard makes little attempt at art criticism. He is mainly a biographer, and what estimate he gives of Cezanne's art is given by the indirect method. To be sure, Monsieur Vollard wastes space in recriminations over the stupidity of a public and press which ridiculed Cezanne or steadfastly ignored his genius. The chapter on Zola is a bit unfair, and might be considered superfluous were it not for its charm and delightfully ironic spirit.

Mr. Van Doren has accomplished that all too rare thing, a convincing and excellent translation. He has turned the exceedingly difficult argot into very colloquial English, almost American. The book includes sixteen well chosen reproductions of paintings by Cezanne.

ARTHUR MOSS.

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Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared John McClure, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the managing editor of The Double Dealer, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to-wit:

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